

ITEM:	9
SUBJECT:	Sacramento River Watershed Program - Status Report on OP Pesticide Management Strategy
DISCUSSION:	<p>The Sacramento River Watershed Program (SRWP) is a stakeholder group dedicated to stewardship of the Sacramento River Watershed. Initiated in 1995, the SRWP has been funded by US EPA grants to the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District, corresponding to line item appropriations from the US Congress. The cornerstones of the SRWP are: (1) the water quality monitoring program; (2) water quality management strategies for contaminants; (3) the education and outreach program; and (4) providing information and assistance for tributary watershed groups. The mission of the program, which was developed by the stakeholders, is: <i>To ensure that current and potential uses of the watershed's resources are sustained, restored, and where possible, enhanced, while promoting the long-term social and economic vitality of the region.</i> The mission statement is fulfilled through the work of subcommittees, where a collaborative stewardship approach is fostered. Interest-based participation is utilized with the goal of achieving consensus on key issues.</p> <p>One Subcommittee, the Toxics Subcommittee, is addressing toxicants in the Sacramento River watershed. Objectives include identifying key toxic constituents of concern and developing strategies to control those constituents. The Subcommittee identified Organophosphate (OP) pesticides as one of two priority issues in the Sacramento River watershed. A subgroup was formed to address this issue and to develop a management plan for OP pesticides. This subgroup, the Sacramento/ Feather River OP Pesticide Focus Group, has met monthly for over a year. Participants include representatives from the California Almond Board; the California Prune Board; Western Crop Protection Association; the Farm Bureau; the UC Integrated Pest Management and Cooperative Extension programs; Glenn, Sutter, and Butte County Agricultural Commissioner's Offices; CERUS Consulting (cover crop expert); the Coalition for Urban/ Rural Environmental Stewardship (CURES); Dow Agrosciences; Novartis, City of Sacramento, Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District, US Geological Survey; Department of Pesticide Regulation; Department of Fish and Game, State Board and the Regional Board. Unfortunately, environmental interest groups are not actively participating in the process. However, Regional Board staff will continue to try to update environmental groups on strategy development progress and solicit input at key decision points. The first management plan developed by the Focus Group, will concentrate on diazinon in the</p>

Sacramento and Feather Rivers, however this plan may have implications extending to other organophosphates and watersheds.

The management plan will provide some of information necessary for the development of the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) required for the Rivers. The goal of a TMDL is to attain state water quality standards. A TMDL is a written, quantitative assessment of water quality problems and contributing pollutant sources. It identifies one or more numeric targets based on applicable water quality standards, specifies the maximum amount of a pollutant that can be discharged, allocates pollutant loads among sources, and provides a basis for taking actions needed to meet the numeric target(s) and implement water quality standards.

Participants in the Sacramento/ Feather River OP Pesticide Focus Group have been concentrating on the selection of an appropriate target. All participants agree that maintenance and protection of beneficial uses is the goal, but participants disagree on what this means and how to enumerate it. The group has summarized their dialogs in a draft report summarizing a range of potential targets derived from the application of five distinct methods/approaches. The report details how each method would derive a target, the assumptions used in applying the method to diazinon in the Sacramento and Feather Rivers, and the numeric target(s) resulting from each method. Participants also developed a set of characteristics for evaluating the suitability of potential targets, including: the scientific merit of each method and set of assumptions, attainability (factoring in pest control and economic impacts) and consistency with regulatory requirements (federal Clean Water Act, the water quality objectives of the Basin Plan and the State's anti-degradation policy). The group has not reached consensus on this complex issue, but it has identified a range of potential targets and considered the perspectives of many diverse interests in evaluating each target. The final selection of a TMDL target will be the responsibility of the Board. Before making this decision, the OP Focus Group requests that Board staff have a public workshop to receive input from all interested parties. (VMC).

RECOMMENDATION:

This is an informational item.

Mgmt. Review _____

Legal Review _____